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FLOOR DEBATE

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more and more of the burden of local governments. And when we have citizenry coming to us and saying, you must control spending, and they ask us to control the spending, but the decisions are made at the local level, how do we accomplish that? This is one avenue which gives us the freedom to accomplish that. It is not something that would be accomplished just by our passing this resolution. It would not even be accomplished by the people voting for it on the ballot. It would in fact take legislative decision and action later for this to come to pass. We may find ourselves with a budget that we would all be blessed by, if the revenue started to pour back in again, and then we wouldn't even have to face the choice. But certainly it would give the Legislature some kind of flexibility and ability to reflect and protect the homestead exemption as it currently exists for those people who sincerely need it. Now, Senator Raikes brings to your attention the person who is really struggling, and there are many Nebraskans out there who are really struggling. In fact, there are many Nebraskans out there who are really struggling, who don't get the homestead exemption...and they are just as low-income, and their home is just as small and inexpensive as the couple he talked to you about...because, in fact, they're not 65 years old. Because, in order to qualify for a homestead exemption, you have to be 65, or disabled. So in fact, what we have is a situation where those bond issues and the general levy are being paid, 100 percent, by people who are struggling to feed their children, to pay their bills, but they have to have a roof over their head and they have to pay the property taxes. So in fact, they are having to pay for these issues. And they may even find that there are some people over 65, but maybe they make one dollar too much, and they voted against that issue, but they're going to pay for it. Or their house may have a value one dollar too much, and they voted against it, but they will have to pay for it. That's democracy. That's what the vote is about. People go to the ballot booth, and we all vote, and majority wins. And sometimes we don't like the outcome, but that's what America is about. So I hope that you will at least consider the committee amendment. It think it certainly achieves what Senator Coordsen and I were trying to do with this, and it is much better language. So if we're going to move forward with it, I would like to see it in the form the committee amendment